



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST

Class No. 002337

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

To plan, prepare and implement the public information program of smaller county departments; to advise county departments on public information strategies and techniques; to inform the public of activities and services provided by county departments; and to perform related work as required.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Public Information Specialist is a professional class that reports to an administrative manager or Departmental Public Affairs Officer. Under general supervision, incumbents are responsible for a broad range of professional public information functions within a county department. This class is distinguished from the Media and Public Relations Specialist class in that the latter is allocated only to the Department of Media and Public Relations, the county's central public information and communications headquarters, and reviews the work of Public Information Specialists before it is released to the media and public.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of essential functions listed in the class specification are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class. Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such functions are a logical assignment for the position.

Essential Functions:

1. Establishes and maintains regular contact with the press, community groups and county officials to meet the department's public information needs.
2. Writes feature articles and press releases on department's activities and functions.
3. Coordinates the distribution of news releases to the media.
4. Organizes promotional events.
5. Organizes and arranges public information campaigns and press conferences for a county department in conjunction with the Office of Media and Public Relations.
6. Initiates and answers correspondence related to public information inquiries and citizen's problems and complaints.
7. Coordinates and conducts county tours for citizen and educational groups.
8. Arranges for guest speakers.
9. Writes scripts and prepares computer-aided slide shows and other presentations.
10. Researches, writes and designs brochures.
11. Provides courteous, high quality service to members of the public by personally responding to requests for service or making appropriate referral.
12. Coordinates activities with fine arts, telecommunications and printing experts.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- Methods of planning and implementing an effective public information program.
- Methods and techniques used in planning press conferences.

- Techniques in developing and producing audio-visual presentations.
- Styles and techniques in writing speeches.
- Telephone, office, and online etiquette.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Skills and Abilities to:

- Compose news releases and feature articles for all communication mediums.
- Develop brochures and pamphlets.
- Complete assignments within strict time constraints.
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.
- Effectively communicate in oral and written form.
- Establish and maintain effective working relations with the Office of Media and Public Relations, the public and representatives from outside agencies.
- Coordinate the activities of audio-visual specialists, graphic artists, or other staff in preparing public information.
- Communicate effectively with a variety of individuals representing diverse cultures and backgrounds and function calmly in adverse situations, which require a high degree of sensitivity, tact and diplomacy.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Provide prompt, efficient and responsive service.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in journalism, telecommunications, English, or a closely related field, OR
2. Two (2) years of full-time experience writing professional news and feature articles, developing and producing commercial audio or video presentations, or working directly in the field of media relations.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Continuous upward and downward flexion of the neck. Frequent: sitting, repetitive use of hands to operate computers, printers and copiers. Occasional: walking, standing, bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, squatting, simple grasping, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying of files weighing up to 10 pounds.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

Certification/Registration

None required.

Working Conditions

Office environment; exposure to computer screens.

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Misdemeanor and/or felony convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation.

Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

New: January 30, 1970
Revised: April 26, 2001
Reviewed: Spring 2003
Revised: June 9, 2004
Revised: February 9, 2005